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AUTHOR LaPoint, James D.
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ABSTRACT

A model student teaching center in physical education was developed in Minneapolis-St. Paul by representatives of the local school district and the University of Minnesota. Twelve advantages resulting from the student teaching program at the center are identified: (1) the curriculum is enriched through the improvement of equipment and resources; (2) student teachers brought new ideas to the center's staff; (3) many student teachers had areas of expertise which improved the center's program of instruction; (4) a more flexible program was offered due to the additional staff; (5) intramural and interscholastic athletic programs functioned more effectively due to additional coaching from the student teachers; (6) interaction with the student teachers encouraged the staff to reexamine their own teaching methods; (7) student teachers enhanced the teaching staff's enthusiasm and spirit; (8) seminar speakers kept the staff up-to-date on current issues and ideas; (9) the involvement with three levels of education enabled the staff to view curriculum in terms of progression and total content; (10) the student teaching program kept the staff in closer contact with the teacher education program at the University; (11) the center's physical education and health education department gained respect and recognition; and (12) the student teachers brought to the staff skills and expertise in new areas. Benefits to the University include: (1) excellent supervision for the student teachers; (2) a progressive program for the student teachers to become acquainted with on a first-hand basis; (3) observational opportunities for sophomore and junior education majors; and (4) assistance for seminars and speakers for curriculum classes. (MM)

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A MODEL FOR A PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SCHOOL HEALTH EDUCATION STUDENT TEACHING CENTER

James D. LaPoint, Ph.D.

Introduction

One of the current innovations in teacher education has been the development and implementation of student teacher centers at the elementary, junior high school, and secondary levels. A student teaching center has the distinct advantage of combining many varied segments of the curriculum and the faculty into a central approach.

The intent of this article is to present the rationale that was utilized for establishing a model student teaching center in physical education in the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area.

The model was jointly developed by faculty representatives of Tartan High School, and the Divisions of Physical Education and School Health Education at the University of Minnesota. This particular model for the student teaching center was a unified approach to preparing health and physical education teachers. As the model developed, Oakdale Elementary School and Hillside Jr. High School were utilized for teaching of elementary physical education and school health education at the junior high school.

Functions of the Student Teaching Center

All the student teachers who were assigned to the Center for the school year were required to start their orientation to student teaching at the same time the regular public school teachers began their fall workshops. This four-week period was called "Pre-Fall Student Teaching." The major focus of the orientation period was: a) to familiarize the student with the actual preparations that were needed before the students begin classes; b) to help plan the units of study for the time the individual will be student teaching; c) to assist in the handing out of locks and other equipment; d) to observe how the master teacher starts each class; e) to assist the supervising teacher with the actual teaching; and f) to familiarize the students with the

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different schedules. This four-week period allowed the student teacher to gradually work into the teaching program, rather than being thrust into an immediate teaching situation.

At Tartan Student Teaching Center, the students divided the four-week orientation period into two weeks at the elementary level and two weeks at the secondary level. If the student teacher was a school health education major or minor appropriate periods of time were spent in that area. Following the four week Pre-Fall period, one-third of the students continued their student teaching experience at either the elementary or secondary level. They remained at this level for six additional weeks of all day student teaching. After the six week period, the student teachers switched to the opposite level and taught there for the remaining seven weeks of the university quarter. All told, the student teacher spent approximately 17 weeks at the student teaching center.

One option for the student teachers who were assigned to Winter or Spring Quarter student teaching was that they must participate in the four week Pre-Fall period, return to the University for regular Fall Quarter Classes and then return either Winter or Spring Quarter to complete the elementary and secondary components of the student teaching experience. This same option was available to school health education majors. Student teachers at the Center also had the opportunity to student coach with either a men's or women's team.

Funding of the Student Teaching Center

The funding for the Center at Tartan was negotiated between the school district and the College of Education, at the University of Minnesota based on the number of student teacher assigned to the Center each year.

Advantages of the Student Teaching Center

The Physical Education and Health Education faculty at Tartan Student Teaching Center listed the following direct benefits of the Center to their School District:

1. The money funding the student teaching program made it possible to enrich the curriculum by improving and adding to the Physical Education and Health Education equipment and resources.
2. The student teachers brought into the departments new ideas, methods, and sources of materials which the faculty at the Center could professionally benefit from.
3. As individuals, many student teacher had an area of expertise which improved the program by instruction to the students and inservicing of the faculty.
4. Additional people in the department made it possible to offer a more flexible program (i.e. open lab supervision, class coverage, team teaching, individualized instruction).
5. The intramural and interscholastic sports programs functioned more effectively with the additional coaching from student coaches.
6. The supervision and consultation with student teachers forced the staff to examine and think more critically about their own mechanics of teaching.
7. The constant turnover of young people in the department indirectly influenced the staff--more enthusiasm, eagerness--spark.
8. Speakers for seminars held at the Center enhanced the program by keeping the staff current on new concepts and ideas.
9. The involvement with three levels of education--elementary, junior high, and senior high made the staff more aware of what was being taught at all in terms of progression and curriculum content.
10. The student teaching program kept the Center staff in closer touch with the University Division of Physical Education and Health Education and

their ideas on teacher education.

11. Tartan's Physical Education and Health Education Department gained respect and recognition as a result of the program.
12. The student teachers helped to inservice the elementary teachers by writing units which the teachers could use, plus provided them with knowledge and physical education skills in which they may not have had expertise.

The program was mutually beneficial to both the University of Minnesota and the Tartan faculty. Benefits to the University include:

1. Provided assignments where student teachers were given excellent supervision under several supervisors during the quarter. In this way, student teachers had the opportunities to work with supervisors who effectively used a variety of methods and organizational procedures that were in keeping with their individual philosophies. There were also opportunities for team planning. When a student teacher is assigned to one supervising teacher, these opportunities are not available.
2. The student teacher became acquainted with a progressive program which included many imaginative ideas in curriculum content and presentation. Tartan maintained a successful, elective, co-ed program.
3. Provided observational opportunities for sophomore and junior majors at the University. The Centers served as a source for demonstration lessons.
4. Assisting with selected seminars.
5. Speaking in curriculum classes.

Personnel

The model was cooperatively developed by the faculty at Tartan and the University of Minnesota Physical Education supervisors. Two Center coordinators, one in health

and one in physical education, were jointly selected by the Center staff and the University supervisors. Their duties were to:

1. Assist in the selection of supervising teachers in the three schools and to coordinate the student teaching experiences.
2. Supervise and evaluate the progress of the student teachers.
3. Serve as resource persons for both the student teachers and supervising teachers.
4. Conduct seminars at the Center in cooperation with the University supervisors.

Evaluation of the Center

The evaluation of the student teaching center was an ongoing process. Once a year the health and physical education coordinators, department chairman, and principal from Tartan High School discussed with the University physical education supervisors and the coordinator of Field Experiences from the College of Education the desirability of continuing the Center from year to year.

The Tartan Student Teaching Center is in its fourth year of operation.

The feedback from the student teachers who have taught at the Center has been extremely positive. They viewed their student teaching experience as a thoroughly organized endeavor in what teaching physical education is all about. The former student teachers have revealed that they were encouraged to be creative, to try new ideas, and to implement their philosophy of physical education. Too many times student teaching experiences turn out to be routine and unimaginative. It is hoped that this model for establishing a Student Teaching Center in physical education can be of benefit to someone else.